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a mere table of contents ; this table, however, in its apparent lack of system—for the thread which binds it together, if there be one, is not evident, even to a careful reader,—really typifies the confusion of the whole book. The faint yet pervasive use of metaphor, too, freshly obscures meaning. So in the end it is not surprising that one lays down the *Transit of Civilization* with some misty impressions which very likely Dr. Eggleston never meant to make. To take at random a single one of these, he can hardly have intended to inform readers unlearned in the law that an ordinary method of conveying real property in old New England was unsupported livery of seisin. His researches must have brought him in sight, for example, of such things as the published volumes of Suffolk Deeds, and Thomas Lechford's Note-Book. To take another of these impressions, he can hardly have intended, at a time when state universities still maintain alternative schools of homoeopathic medicine, and educated people flock to seminaries of Christian Science, that we should serenely smile at the medical superstition of three centuries ago, as if all such superstition were dead and gone. And he must know that even to this day a knowledge of Latin proves, no one can tell why, the soundest basis for mental training. And so on. His confusion might seriously mislead.

But this is more than enough of fault-finding. Though the *Transit of Civilization* had deeper faults still, it would remain a book worth reading. As a collection of out-of-the-way and curious memoranda, suggesting all manner of discursive speculation, it has a quality and a charm which queerly group it in memory with Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, and Burton's *Anatomy*, and whatever other treasures of oddity one may be fond of. It has over these, too, the advantage that its own references to authority may always be trusted and will often prove illuminating. Last and best of all, it really points the way to a kind of American history which in time may flood our past with revivifying light. For we shall never fully know ourselves until some imaginative, sympathetic historian, mature in power and reflection, shall have shown us, in semblance of its old vitality, what was the true mental and moral condition of our emigrant fathers, in their habit as they lived.

BARRETT WENDELL.

*The Expansion of the American People, Social and Territorial.* By EDWIN ERLE SPARKS, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of American History, The University of Chicago. (Chicago : Scott, Foresman and Co. 1900. Pp. 461.)

EVER since the north temperate coast of the western hemisphere began to be occupied by European settlers, population and civilization have been spreading westward. So important has this westward movement been, and so much more marked than the movement in any other direction, that it is a common-place observation. All that was ever needed to prove its existence was to state the relevant facts clearly ; and it does not

need any critical analysis or elaborate argument to prove that there have been some great impelling forces behind it. The forces may be difficult to identify. Perhaps some of them lie deep down in human nature among the other forces of involuntary human action. But however that may be, they have been as irresistible as they are unconscious, and as ceaseless as they are irresistible. It needs only a comparatively few carefully selected facts, skillfully interpreted and woven into a plain narrative, to make a convincing demonstration of their presence and their power ; and when they are once admitted to exist what reason is there for believing that they would suddenly cease to operate when population reached the Pacific ? Why should they not be expected to persist and to cause the restless pioneer to overleap barriers, northward or southward, eastward or westward, over seas or wherever else there are lands unoccupied by an equally vigorous population and culture ?

In the book under review, Professor Sparks has told how population and culture have been carried from Europe to America and from the Atlantic to the Pacific by the people who have become pre-eminently the "American people ;" and he has shown also how the same forces that have carried them over this region have by logical necessity launched them upon a colonial career.

The author is evidently an assiduous investigator in the highways and byways of history. He is also a believer in illustrative material. His book abounds in outline maps and photographic reproductions of title-pages, broadsides, advertisements, objects and scenes of historical interest. In the text he has sought with a few data to give a general effect ; and has avoided the effort to be exhaustive in the enumeration of details. The book does not give the local history of the settlement of Virginia, or Ohio, or Kansas, or California. It is a monograph, and not a long one, on the "Expansion of the American People." Nineteen pages are allowed for bringing the narrative down to the period of American colonization ; one hundred and twenty-two carry it on through the consideration of the "Pioneer life in the Ohio Valley ;" fifty are devoted to the "Rounding out of the Gulf Possessions" and the "Assimilation of the Frontier French Elements ;" seventy to the period from the beginning of "The Oregon Expansion" to the completion of a "Transcontinental Railroad ;" and other chapters are devoted to "The National Seat of Government," "The Cumberland Road and the Erie Canal" and to American intellectual life, reforms and utopias.

Often what the narrative omits and what it contains are equally unconventional even if not always in accord with the reader's taste and judgment. Less space is given to the arguments made in Congress against the annexation of Louisiana than to the public ridicule incurred by Jefferson through his credulous belief in the existence of a huge mountain of rock salt in the new territory. The Indian wars of St. Clair and Wayne are treated of in a foot-note of six lines ; but half a page is filled with typical songs of the Ohio flat-boat-men. The arguments for and against internal improvements are curtly treated ; but the information, that between

1806 and 1838 sixty separate appropriations aggregating \$6,821,246, were made for the Cumberland road alone, is made to speak forcibly of the general determination of the people to have internal improvements at national expense. Thus amusing incident and significant fact, both alike gleaned from researches in the original sources, jostle against each other. Some of the expected topics are crowded out and the literary style shows departure from the sober vein of conventional historical composition.

In brief, the book contains, first, a number of significant facts not before used; secondly, considerable excellent illustrative material; and thirdly, a general but pretty definite impression of the irresistible expansion of the American people.

Of minor criticisms two only can be mentioned here. One concerns the interpretation (not peculiar to Sparks) of Jefferson's recommendation that Congress should "do *sub silentio* what shall be found necessary" to complete the acquisition of Louisiana. It must be interpreted in the light of Jefferson's proposed solution of the impending dilemma: first, secure the transfer of the territory so that France, if she should repent of her bargain, as it was feared, should repent in vain; secondly let Congress and the people freely and soberly consider whether and how they will heal the *ultra vires* action of a "guardian" government, done "beyond the constitution." What Jefferson expected was a positive act of ratification, not a decision by default that there had been no action *ultra vires*. (Cf. *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Ford, VIII. 244-245, notes).

The illustration on p. 295 of "A Western Mission" suggests the inquiry whether these massive stone buildings erected at Nashota, Wisconsin, by the Protestant Episcopal Church for the education of the Indians, are a typical western mission, and whether the influence of the great home missionary societies, those excellent institutions through which the East subsidized the religious work on the Frontier, does not deserve a comprehensive treatment.

FREDERICK W. MOORE.

*A Literary History of America.* By BARRETT WENDELL, Professor of English at Harvard College. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1900. Pp. 574.)

READERS who are familiar with Professor Wendell's other books will open his *Literary History of America* with the expectation that, whatever else it may or may not be, it will be at least interesting and suggestive. They will not be disappointed. The book is readable from beginning to end, and its point of view is often novel and stimulating. In its total effect it differs essentially from any other work on the same subject.

Rightly to understand the book it is necessary, first of all, to get a clear idea of its purpose and method. It is not a complete, detailed history of American literature, and evidently is not intended to be. In Book